



Aquatics retailers, suppliers, and hobbyists:

Our corner of the pet world is once again in the spotlight thanks to the impending release of Pixar's "Finding Dory." This is a good thing, as it gives us a chance to engage the general public on a greater scale than we usually can.

It's an opportunity to educate newcomers on responsible fishkeeping and to set them up for success by guiding them to appropriate starter tanks and fish.

It's also an opportunity to talk about the ways we work with partners like the federal government and international organizations to promote responsible habits and attitudes toward fishkeeping and environmental protection.

And it's an opportunity to share the numerous positive efforts supported – and initiated – by the ornamental aquatics community to promote and advance sustainability, preserve and restore coral reefs, and support and encourage indigenous peoples who rely on responsible collection methods for sustenance.

Of course, we aren't the only ones who view this increased interest as an opportunity. We've already seen activists advancing anti-aquatics agendas and misinformed media repeating their claims as fact. They portray us as callous and profit-driven, concerned only with cashing in and not at all with care.

Attached, you'll find a number of pieces that have been prepared by PIJAC and our partners at the Pet Leadership Council to help you, on the front lines, tell our story. We hope you'll use these handouts and articles to educate your employees, your customers and your colleagues throughout the industry. Please share them widely and direct those interested in more information to www.pijac.org or the new PLC-sponsored website www.happyhealthyfish.pet.

Most of all, we ask you to help us show the industry's commitment to responsible aquarium-keeping through your actions and interactions in the days and weeks to come. We will all be judged by the conduct of the few. If you see a colleague or a competitor acting in a way that reflects poorly on the industry, make it a point to say something. We owe it to the animals in our care, and early intervention could head off negative attention.

Please contact us with any questions or concerns, or to learn more about PIJAC's efforts on behalf of the responsible ornamental aquatics trade through our Aquatics Committee and Aquatics Defense Fund.

Peach Reid
PIJAC Chair

Mike Bober
President & CEO

Sandy Moore
Aquatics Committee Chair

Responsible Fish Keeping and Environmental Stewardship

The Pet Leadership Council embraces the responsibility to ensure the health and welfare of aquatic life, promote environmental stewardship and provide education and training on responsible fish keeping.

The Pet Industry Supports

- Promoting and advancing aquaculture efforts for captive breeding of all marine life
- Establishing standards for responsible and sustainable collection and handling of all marine life
- Educating consumers on responsible fish keeping
- Celebrating the educational and health benefits associated with fish keeping

Industry Wide Backing

Bob Vetere,

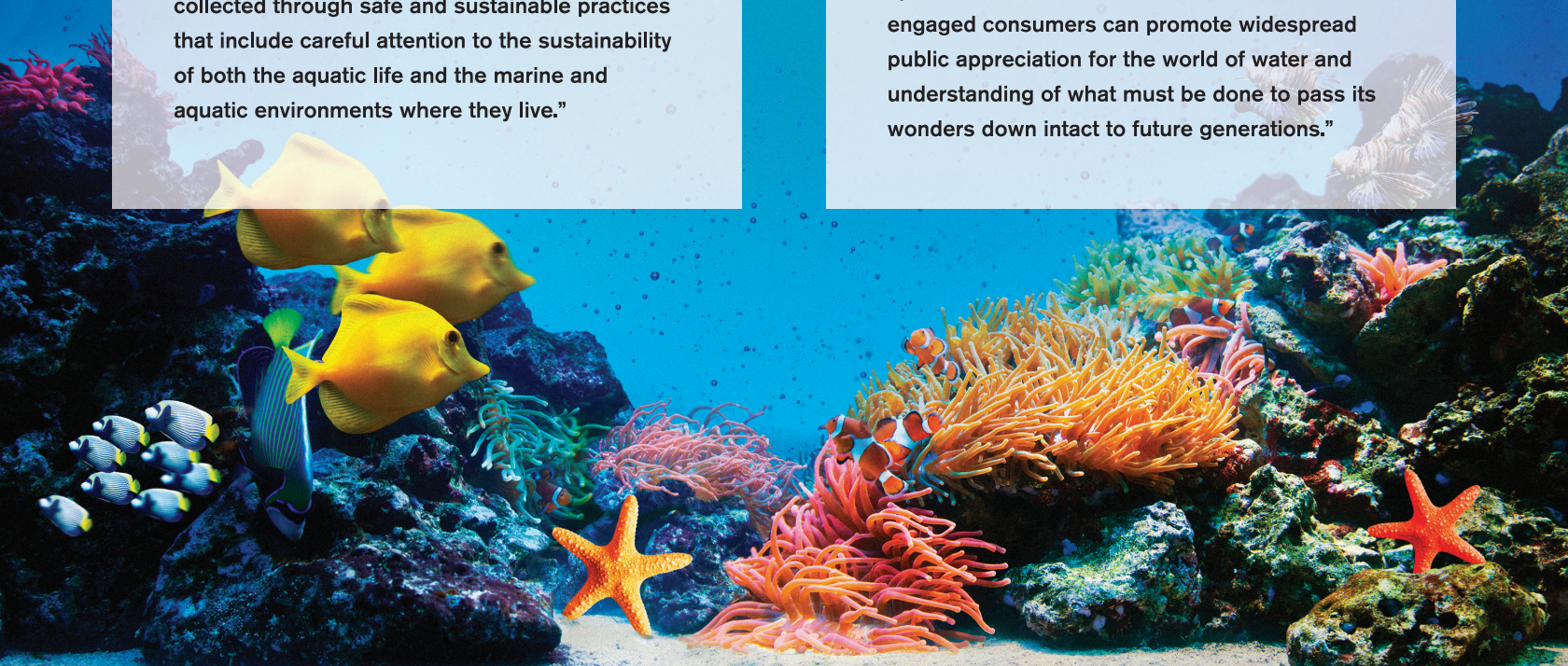
Chairman of the Pet Leadership Council

“We are committed to offering fish and marine life that is produced through aquaculture or collected through safe and sustainable practices that include careful attention to the sustainability of both the aquatic life and the marine and aquatic environments where they live.”

Michael Tlusty,

PHD, from the New England Aquarium

“This is a unique opportunity for consumer-driven conservation in the wild which can promote species and habitat conservation. Informed and engaged consumers can promote widespread public appreciation for the world of water and understanding of what must be done to pass its wonders down intact to future generations.”



Chris Buerner,
President of Quality Marine

“This opportunity for the aquatics industry to align itself with responsible best practices is very encouraging. These practices are an evolving set of science-based principles that embrace the concepts of sustainability, sound animal husbandry, and education for viable and successful participation in an increasingly complex trade.”

Sandy Moore,
Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC)

“The pet industry must take every measure to promote responsible pet ownership and avoid fish and aquatic plants being released into the oceans and waterways. Habitattitude is a key element of this effort.”

Steven Feldman,
Executive Director for the Human Animal Bond Research Initiative (HABRI)

“The scientific research on the human health benefits of fish keeping is strong.”

Dr. Amy McCullough,
American Humane Association

“The welfare of aquatic life and animals should be the pet industry’s top priority. I applaud what the industry is doing to establish standards for responsible and humane treatment of aquatic life.”



HabitattitudeTM
PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT
DO NOT RELEASE FISH AND AQUATIC PLANTS

Habitattitude

Environmental stewardship is critical to help preserve the sustainability of aquatic life. Habitattitude encourages you to adopt a conservation mentality and protect our environment by not releasing unwanted fish and aquatic plants into the environment.

The PLC is asking member companies to include Habitattitude messaging on all product packaging.

<http://www.habitattitude.net>



Rising Tide

Coral reefs face growing threats, including ocean acidification, warming ocean temperatures, coral bleaching, pollution, and over-exploitation. All of these factors can disrupt the reef's delicate balance. Efforts to help the marine species that inhabit these reef environments can focus on sustainable collection, reef protection and conservation, and culture of vertebrate, invertebrate, and coral species.

The mission of Rising Tide Conservation is to protect reefs by developing techniques for rearing marine ornamental fish and promoting commercial production to provide alternatives to reef collection.

<http://www.risingtideconservation.org>

The PLC encourages the entire pet industry to take the necessary steps to ensure the health and welfare of aquatic life, promote environmental stewardship and provide education and training on responsible fish keeping.

For more information, please contact Bob Likins, bob@pijac.org or call him at (202) 452-1525, ext. 1070

Animals Always Come First!

Habitattitude™ is a “conservation state-of-mind” that commits to environmental protection by not releasing unwanted fish or aquatic plants into public areas. Habitattitude™ is a national initiative developed by the Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Task Force in partnership with the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Sea Grant and NOAA.

Protecting Our Environment

In order to continue enjoying our natural resources, we must protect them. Individuals as well as commercial and governmental groups have knowingly and/or accidentally introduced aquatic invasive species to our waters. An invasive species or “aquatic hitchhiker” is a species not native to a body of water and causes ecological harm. If these species become established, they can cause environmental damage, degrade aquatic resources and make waters unusable for recreation. Collectively these species, both terrestrial and aquatic, cost our county billions of dollars in damages every year. Their impact reduces fish populations, ruins boat engines, makes lakes/streams unusable by boaters and swimmers, increases operating costs of water treatment, power and industrial processing plants, reduces native species, degrades ecosystems, and reduces property values.

What You Can Do to Help

Aquarists, pond owners and water gardeners all share a common responsibility to our water resources and to the live species they own. By having these species, we must accept certain responsibilities:

- To care for the species well-being and provide a suitable environment.
- To maintain and take the appropriate steps to keep the species in our privately-owned enclosures contained.
- To properly relocate these species, fish or plants, if they are not native to our aquatic system.
- To follow the laws of your state regarding the acquisition, collection, possession, purchase, sale, release and transfer of ownership of these non-native plant and fish species.

If you have acquired an undesirable, nonnative aquatic plant or fish species for your aquarium or water garden, it is important not to release these plants or fish into the environment including not flushing them into the city sewer system.

Habitattitude™ encourages you to choose one of these alternatives:

- Contact the store where the plant or fish was purchased for proper handling advice or possible return.
- Give or trade with another aquarist, pond owner, or water gardener.
- Donate to a local aquarium society, school, or aquatic business.
- Seal aquatic plants in plastic bags and dispose in trash.
- Contact a veterinarian specializing in exotics for guidance on humane disposal of fish.

Habitattitude™ is about consumer awareness and responsible behaviors. We must all work together to prevent the proliferation of harmful plants, fish and other animals throughout our country. Stopping the spread of these species represents one of our greatest natural resource challenges.



Habitattitude™

PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT
DO NOT RELEASE FISH AND AQUATIC PLANTS

PIJAC • U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE • NOAA'S SEA GRANT

www.Habitattitude.net

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Telling Our Story with Finding Dory

With the release of the new movie Finding Dory, the pet industry has an opportunity to educate the public on fish keeping, environmental stewardship and the need to protect the aquarium hobby.

BY MIKE BOBER

Later this month, *Finding Dory*, a highly anticipated sequel to the movie *Finding Nemo*, will swim into theaters across the country. While some media have chosen to portray this as a crisis-in-waiting for marine life, the reality is that it is a chance for those of us in the pet industry to engage large numbers of people across multiple generations. It's up to us to inform them about the many ways the aquatics trade works to protect aquatic life, advance environmental responsibility and partner with hobbyists and newcomers alike to promote responsible fish keeping.

Finding Dory follows a sweet and amnesic *Paracanthurus hepatus*, also known as a palette surgeonfish, royal blue tang or hippo tang, as she seeks to reunite with her family. The concept, colors and characters are sure to be a hit with children of all ages. That's what has some people worried.

In the years since the release of *Finding Nemo*, there have been several attempts to demonstrate a so-called "Nemo effect" on wild populations of clownfish. Despite the frequency with which it is cited, however, there is no real evidence to support such an effect. While the movie did encourage many families to consider bringing freshwater and marine aquariums into their homes, breeders and sellers of clownfish saw no appreciable rise in demand.

Even so, we in the responsible aquatics trade should be ready to tell our story when it comes to *Finding Dory*. We should be advocating aquariums as a great opportunity to introduce children to the requirements of pet ownership. We should be talking about the demonstrated health benefits aquariums offer to patients in long-term care facilities. But there are important things we need to do, as well.

We need to discuss the responsibilities and requirements that go into fish keeping, and to help interested newcomers find their right fish. We also need to talk about all of the positive things that the industry does to promote conservation, captive breeding and responsible collection practices around the world. And we need to partner with hobbyists and enthusiasts to defend aquarium keeping from those who would harm it through unnecessarily restrictive legislation.

While the industry is working to spread the word about our efforts through national campaigns, our greatest opportunity for advocacy occurs each and every time someone walks into a store interested in aquatics. In preparation for these conversations, we would encourage all retailers to keep in mind three key elements of telling our story with *Finding Dory*.



Preparation

The first step in creating a new, lifelong aquarium enthusiast is matching them up with the ideal starter setup. While they may be enchanted by Dory and her friends, the reality is that a hippo tang requires a significant investment of space and resources to appropriately care for it. Discussions with a newcomer to aquarium keeping that focus on housing needs, care requirements and compatibility are essential; while some people may be prepared to care for a hippo tang, we can help guide others to alternatives that they are more likely to succeed with and enjoy.

Protection

Educated customers will want to know what we're doing as an industry to ensure that we're not harming the environment or endangering marine life in the course of supplying them with their aquarium fish. This is an opportunity to discuss a wide range of industry initiatives that focus on environmental stewardship, support of indigenous collectors and sustainable aquaculture. Some excellent examples of these efforts include:

- **Habitattitude**—This public-private partnership focuses on the importance of protecting the environment by not releasing unwanted fish, reptiles and aquatic plants into the wild.
- **Coral Restoration Foundation (CRF)**—A nonprofit organization working to preserve and restore threatened coral species, the CRF is active around the world in cultivating and “outplanting” new coral to combat the declines that were experienced in previous decades.
- **Project Piaba**—Sustainable fishing is an economic driver along the Rio Negro in Brazil. Without this source of income, local peoples would be forced to turn to more environmentally impactful occupations such as mining and logging. Project Piaba promotes the Amazonian aquarium fish trade and helps to preserve it as a viable livelihood.
- **Rising Tide Conservation**—This initiative focuses on the development of fish propagation techniques that allow for more marine ornamental species to be sustainably raised in captivity.

Partnership

Aquatic enthusiasts are among the best-educated and most-engaged pet owners, and they recognize the need to defend their hobby against well-intentioned, but ultimately harmful, regulations and legislation. Developing relationships with the customers you supply – either individually or through local aquatic societies – is the key to being able to quickly and effectively engage. At the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC), we maintain an Aquatic Defense Fund for exactly this purpose; contact us for more information on how to get involved.

With these concepts in mind, we can all work together to ensure that this film release and others like it in the future result in positive experiences and increased awareness.

Mike Bober is president and CEO of the [Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council](http://PetIndustryJointAdvisoryCouncil.org). For more information on ways to engage the public and your elected officials, contact him at mbober@pijac.org.

happy, healthy saltwater and freshwater homes

Saltwater and freshwater fish need a large, well-balanced environment to thrive. Make sure you're prepared to take on the extra responsibility required before bringing these beautiful fish home.



saltwater
Marine aquarium

29 gallons and up recommended
with sufficient filtration and proper husbandry



\$535

Average setup cost for a 29G tank



One inch of fish per **two gallons** of water

While this a general guideline, it is very important that the needs of each individual fish be considered when choosing the size and placement of your aquarium.

20 minutes weekly maintenance



Daily process

Monitor fish and aquarium health, check temperature and feed properly

Weekly process

Top off with treated freshwater, check and adjust temperature, check and adjust salinity level, clean glass and empty protein skimmer

Monthly process (every 3-4 weeks)

Pre-mix salt with treated freshwater, replace 25% of water with treated water of the same temperature, clean glass to remove algae, replace filter cartridge/media, clean protein skimmer, check salinity level and verify pH level



freshwater
Tropical aquarium

10 gallons and up recommended
with sufficient filtration and proper husbandry



\$100

Average setup cost for a 10G tank



One inch of fish per **one gallon** of water

While this a general guideline, it is very important that the needs of each individual fish be considered when choosing the size and placement of your aquarium.

10 minutes weekly maintenance



Daily process

Monitor fish and aquarium health, check temperature and feed properly

Weekly process

Top off with treated freshwater, check and adjust temperature and clean glass

Monthly process (every 3-4 weeks)

Replace 25% of water with treated water of the same temperature, clean glass to remove algae and replace filter cartridge



Dory, a Blue Tang, cannot join Nemo in an aquarium less than 150 gallons because she will grow up to be over 12 inches. If you want to keep Dory with fish like Nemo you will need to purchase a large aquarium. Clownfish similar to Nemo can live in smaller aquariums.





Pet Leadership Council

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Pet Leadership Council Launches Effort on Responsible Fish Keeping

***Finding Dory* Movie Expected to Spur Interest**

Greenwich, CT (X, 2016) -- The Pet Leadership Council (PLC) announced today an effort to promote the health and welfare of aquatic life, environmental stewardship, and responsible fish keeping. The PLC is comprised of pet industry leaders, animal welfare advocates, veterinarians, and academia, uniting everyone who cares for our pets behind core principles and a nationwide public education effort.

“With the release of *Finding Dory* boosting interest in fish keeping, we want people to know that the pet industry is committed to offering fish and marine life that are produced through aquaculture or collected through safe and sustainable practices that include careful attention to the sustainability of both the aquatic life and the marine and aquatic environments where they live,” said PLC Chairman Bob Vetere.

The PLC supports the following Core Principles:

- Promote and advancing aquaculture efforts for captive breeding of all marine life
- Establish standards for responsible and sustainable collection and handling of all marine life
- Educate consumers on responsible fish keeping
- Celebrate the educational and health benefits associated with fish keeping

To help educate consumers about selecting the right fish and appropriate aquarium and proper care instructions, the prevention of invasive species and ongoing conservation efforts, the PLC will be launching a new website, www.happyhealthyfish.pet that will include a fun, interactive game to teach proper fishkeeping. In addition, pet stores across the country will have in-store educational materials so that people can choose the right fish.

“American Humane Association applauds what the Pet Leadership Council is doing to educate consumers about responsible and humane treatment of aquatic life,” said Dr. Amy McCullough National Director, Humane Research and Therapy for American Humane Association.

Disney has also created resources and guidelines to help educate consumers on selecting the right fish that can be found on its website at: <http://movies.disney.com/finding-dory>.

Another important resource included in this effort is [Habitattitude](#), a joint effort between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and industry partners to prevent the release of invasive species into the wild.

“The pet industry must take every measure to promote responsible pet ownership and avoid fish and aquatic plants being released into the oceans and waterways,” said Vetere. “The PLC is asking member companies to include Habitattitude messaging on product packaging.”

PLC members are actively supporting the work of [Rising Tide Conservation](#), which has the mission of protecting coral reefs by developing techniques for rearing marine ornamental fish and promoting commercial production to provide alternatives to reef collection, as well as other sustainability projects worldwide.

“Without the support of the pet industry, the advances of Rising Tide in marine aquaculture would not be possible. We continue to develop new techniques in aquaculture to support fish and coral reefs worldwide,” said Rising Tide Conservation’s Director, Dr. Judy St. Leger.

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About the Pet Leadership Council:

The Pet Leadership Council is made up of pet industry leaders, animal welfare, veterinarians and academia and advocates for pets and those who serve and support them by promoting responsible pet ownership and educating the public on efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of companion animals.